

MOTHER

By Wesley Taylor

a not very P.C. comedy

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LIGHTS UP ON:

REDA (60s/70s) and MIRANDA (30s/40s) sit across the kitchen table in silence. There are small plates of banana bread, half-eaten.

MIRANDA

Well..? ...Say something.

REDA

If you want to marry the brown boy, what do I have against-

MIRANDA

Brown boy, mother, really?

REDA

Well, he's not really black.

MIRANDA

Believe it or not, you don't have to describe him by the color of his skin. You could just-

REDA

You're telling me if there were two men standing before us right now, same age, same height... and you wanted to direct my attention towards one of them, you'd say: 'The guy in the red shirt?'

MIRANDA

Yeah, I think I would.

REDA

And what if they were both wearing a red shirt?

MIRANDA

(Exasperated) If they were both wearing red, I would find another characteristic- You know what, mom? Just say 'person of color.' That's the acceptable phrase-

REDA

Person. Of. *Color?*

MIRANDA

Yes! 'Person of color.' I can no longer stand to listen to you say things like-

REDA

First you tell me I can't call them black people but African-American, which doesn't even make sense considering it doesn't apply to-

MIRANDA

Right, so now we say 'person of color.'

REDA

'Person of color...?' Do they *really* want to be called that? *Really?* Would *you* want to be called that? ...This reminds me of the 'midget' dilemma.

MIRANDA

Mom.

REDA

You tell me midgets would like to be called "Little People." Why in the world would they want to be called something actually *more* belittling than the original term.

MIRANDA

Ugh!

REDA

You see what I did there?

MIRANDA

No.

REDA

‘Belittling.’ ...It was a pun.

Beat.

MIRANDA

Well, at least you’re telling jokes. This.. This could have gone worse.. I guess.

She sighs; takes the banana bread plates to the kitchen sink.

REDA

You think I’m this... this- You know, I dated an oriental once.

MIRANDA

He was *Asian* yes, I’ve heard this story many-

REDA

Oriental, Asian, you spend so much time worrying about what other people think.

MIRANDA

Mom, it’s less about what other people think and more a sensitivity to others and how they’d like to be treated; how they’d like to be addressed. It’s called respect.

REDA

It’s called I’m exhausted. We’re all so nervous about offending each other. I feel like my whole life I’m tiptoeing! I’m walking on eggshells trying not to hurt anyone’s feelings.

MIRANDA

(Dry) That must be really hard for you.

REDA

(Pushing a button) What’s his name again?

MIRANDA

LeBron James.

Beat.

Maxwell. You *know* his name, mom. *Max*.

REDA

What about the kid?

MIRANDA

What about him?

REDA

What are you going to do about him?

MIRANDA

Well, I figure once we get married I'll find a nearby ditch and when no one's looking...

Beat.

Mom, I love them. I love Maxwell. And I love Richie. Like he's my own.

REDA

You know what I'm talking about.

MIRANDA

Do I?

REDA

That kid... is a homosexual.

MIRANDA

Richie's ten years old.

REDA

I'm good at callin' these things.

MIRANDA

Oh yeah, mom? Ya got good gay-dar?

REDA

(Laughing) Gay-dar, I like that. Radar but gay. Did you come up with that?

MIRANDA

No.

REDA

Gay-dar. Heh.

MIRANDA

Richie may very well be-

REDA

He's *definitely* gay.

MIRANDA

Well, I can't think of a better father for him to come out to then. We'll love him just the same, if not more.

REDA

Why *more*?

MIRANDA

I don't- Forget it.

REDA

Is it because he'll need more love? Kids are brutal in school.

MIRANDA

You'd be surprised, actually. Richie has a couple trans gender children at his school.

REDA

...Come again?

MIRANDA

Trans gender. Don't play dumb.

REDA

Children?!

MIRANDA

It's perfectly normal, mother. Doctors can detect early signs of-

REDA

When you were six, I couldn't get you to put on a dress. You'd kick and scream. You'd only play with boy things and wear boy clothes. Does that mean you were supposed to be a boy? Should I have chopped off your penis at age six?!

MIRANDA

These kids are not having reassignment surgery, mom! They haven't even gone through-

REDA

So what do they do?!

MIRANDA

Clothes, haircut, maybe a new name. You change the pronouns.

REDA

Those poor parents. ...What else?

MIRANDA

(Cautiously) Some parents.. *(She sighs; knows how this will be received)* Hormones. Sometimes puberty blockers.

REDA

Jesus Christ.

MIRANDA

It's totally safe!

REDA

Wow.

MIRANDA

A lot has changed in medical development, mom.

REDA

They don't know what'll happen to these kids when they're middle-aged! Where's the 50 years of evidence?! This is...! Do they all share the same bathrooms? Locker rooms?

MIRANDA

Of course!

REDA

What do you mean, of course! What if little bobby wanted to peek at little suzy so he tells mommy and daddy he's a girl and wants to have sleep overs with the door shut, I mean, where does it end?!

MIRANDA

Oh yes, the age old 'where does it end?' I hate this- If two men can get married, what's next? Men marry dogs? Men marry children? It's the first place conservatives go-

REDA

Just try for a second to see where the fear comes from, Miranda.